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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6916
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE 0049
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/USNMR SHAPE BE//SA/SACEUR// IMMEDIATE
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RHMFISS/39ABG INCIRLIK AB TU IMMEDIATE
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SUBJECT: ACTION REQUEST: TGS REQUESTS U.S. SIGN ON TO
DOCUMENT INVITING "TRNC" TO RELIANT MERMAID EXERCISE

Classified By: Ambassador Wilson for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (U) This is an action request -- please see paras. 3.

12. (C/REL GBR, CAN, AUS) Naval Attache (ALUSNA) attended June 20-21 planning talks in the southern Aksaz Naval with Turkish General Staff and Israeli military officials for the annual U.S.-Israel-Turkey trilateral RELIANT MERMAID maritime SAR exercise in the eastern Mediterranean, scheduled for August 21-25, 2006. On June 21, the Turkish delegation asked both the Israeli and U.S. representatives to sign an agreed minute which, inter alia, noted that the three parties had agreed to invite the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus," among others, to observe the exercise. (In fact, Turkish authorities had already invited the "TRNC" to send observers.) The Israeli representative signed the document. ALUSNA did not, telling TGS that he required guidance first. On June 22, TGS provided revised minutes which omitted reference to which countries might observe the exercise and instead documented what activities were planned for the observers. With this change, the 6th Fleet representative signed the agreed minute.

13. (C/REL GBR, CAN, AUS) ACTION REQUEST: We know of no precedent for "TRNC" officials observing exercises in which we are participants. At the same time, this exercise is important, as it solidifies Turkish-Israeli ties and demonstrates to the Muslim world that cooperation with Israel (and us) can be beneficial. We therefore recommend that we continue to plan for and participate in RELIANT MERMAID despite the probable presence of a Turkish Cypriot representative. While doing so, USN planners will need to ensure that no activities are planned that could suggest or imply U.S. recognition of the "TRNC" (e.g., no joint appearances with observers, no US-hosted events for observers, etc.). Please confirm that we may pursue this course of action. END ACTION REQUEST.

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WILSON